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Samson

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RICK BURSKY

Samson

Whoever said a butterfly couldn't be trained
never met Samson, the Monarch Butterfly
who held a match to the tip of my cigar,
turned the page of a book when I nodded,
closed the television when I fell asleep on the sofa.
At night Samson floated just above my open mouth,
ascending when I exhaled, sinking when I didn't,
believing that I was God, that the rush of air from my lungs
would always be there to save him
from being crushed in my esophagus,
believing that he would live as long as I did
and to a Monarch Butterfly a man is forever.
I know what you're thinking,
unbelievable, but I have a photograph
of Samson pouring milk into my coffee.
That, of course, will convince you.
Photography being the art of evidence.
Evidence the science of lies.
Lies the currency of art.
I participate in none of the above.
A scientist once told me she loved
her butterflies pinned behind the glass;
voodoo dolls for crucified lovers.
"Drag your tongue on the walls,"
she said, "you could taste them. "
And I did. Love creates obedience.